

# The Republican.

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## THE AGE OF THE WORLD.

*An Enquiry into the probable Age of the World, from the length of time the perpendicular height of Mountains of salt, found in different parts of the Globe, (particularly that of a newly discovered Mountain on the banks of the Missouri in Louisiana, North America,) must have required to have accumulated; founded upon Dr. Edmund Halley's observations on the evaporation of the waters of the Ocean.*

WRITTEN IN 1821.

"Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea,  
Or hast thou walked into the search of its depth?"

JOB.

THE prodigious mountains of common salt,<sup>1</sup> and masses of it found in mines in various parts of the earth, viz. in Calabria, Hungary, Muscovy, Spain, and Poland, &c., and lately an enormous mountain of it, near the river Missouri, in North America, must appear to those acquainted with geological studies, to have been deposited by the evaporation of the sea. Few, or none, maintain that pit coal, or mountains of lime &c., were created in their present form, wherein the skeletons of animals have been found, but that these enormous masses must have been formed by deposition: that of coal<sup>2</sup>, by the decay of vegetable matter, perhaps of marine and terrestrial animals; and, from analogy, the masses

<sup>1</sup> In the Duchey of Magdeburg, according to Von Koeck's account in 1801, "there were 275262 salt springs running, which afforded more salt than supplied all the demands of Europe." These must have their source, without doubt, in salt mountains of enormous magnitude!

<sup>2</sup> Parke, speaking of pit coal, says, "Supposing the formation of pit coal to be owing to the deposition of vegetable and marine animal matter, (this, as to deposition, applies also to mountains of salt) the same process must be still going on, and the inmost recesses of the present seas, may be receiving materials for the comfort and use of the inhabitants of new Continents, in the most remote periods of time to come."

petrified by means of the sea, where it is supposed to exist in profusion: that of lime, as being the remains of the shells and bones of native salt, alum, salt-petre, and other soluble substances, are formed by deposition and evaporation, of the medium in which they were originally in solution.

If it be true that the waters of the ocean are more salt now, than in former ages, which seems extremely probable, and is generally believed, from the perpetual influx of rivers carrying down with them the salts with which the earth abounds; the doctrine of large masses being found, not only of salt, but other substances carried off from the mountains by solution and detrition, and deposited at the bottom of the ocean, must be correct, while the saltiness of the sea, and the size of these submarine mountains, must be daily augmenting, and, in fact, if we could dispose of all the aqueous vapours rising from the ocean, without returning them by the means of rivers, we should obtain, in process of time, the bed of the sea, composed of dry salt, coal, limestone, and other alluvial matters<sup>3</sup>, and it is not stretching the hypothesis too far, to say, that these *strata* at the bottom of the ocean, may be a series of materials for mountains in a new world, or rather, the renovation of this, for we evidently discover alternate *strata* of limestone, coal, shells, &c., in the mountains at present above the body of the waters; and why may not the continuance of this deposition of matter, carried down by the rivers, so alter, in process of time, the centre of gravity of the body of the earth, that what is dry land at the present period, may be immersed into the sea, while the masses now at the bottom, may be raised up into mountains of lime, salt, &c.<sup>4</sup>? for it is fully admitted, and known to old people, that the ocean is making encroachments on some coasts, whilst it is receding from others.

If we bring into view the powerful agent EVAPORATION, which, in the Mediterranean Sea alone, is greater than the supply of all the rivers together, that flow into it, viz. the Nile, the Tiber, the Rhone, the Po, &c., (for independant of calculations that have been made upon this subject, there is a constant current running into the Mediterranean from the Atlantic, to supply the waste,) we shall be at no loss to conceive, that masses, *even mountains of salt*, are forming in the ocean by this abstraction of fresh water. Dr. Maise, the author just quoted, has the following remark, "Salt lakes are formed by the same process of evaporation, when

<sup>3</sup> The late Dr. Maise (Popular Lecturer on Natural philosophy) mentioned, "That the quantity of real salt in the ocean, supposing it deprived of water, would be equal to a mass thirty miles deep, and one hundred and fifty millions of miles of surface!!"

<sup>4</sup> On the summit of Mont Perdu, the loftiest of the Pyrenees, which is upwards of 10000 feet high, (or nearly two miles) marine productions are found in great abundance, as well as in many other high parts, far removed from the sea. See also Brydonis's Tour, Letter xviii. Edin. 1808.

they have no exit, and it is with great reason believed, that if we could ascertain exactly what quantity of salt is deposited in one year, we could, by comparing this with the whole quantity already formed in any one sea or lake, have a tolerable guess of the age of our Planet."

It may be advanced indeed, that the evaporation is restored by the whole body of rivers returning into the ocean, and thus the saline particles would still remain in a fluid state, but it is to be observed, that there is a strong fact against this assertion, viz. the universally received opinion, that the saltiness of the ocean has been for ages augmenting, that the saltiness is much greater at great depths, than nearer the surface<sup>5</sup>, and, consequently, of a greater specific gravity; thus, the evaporation that does take place, (which, of course, must be fresh water) is principally from the contents of the rivers, the waters of which are in a great degree supernatant, as may be seen on the surface of the sea, at the mouths of rivers when they are swollen and muddy<sup>6</sup>; hence, there must be a constant deposition of saline and other particles, while the fresh water alone is carried off, and thus, the saltiness increasing, must at last concrete and form masses. Upon this principle it is, that immense strata, and even whole hills of salt, are found in the sandy deserts of Arabia, particularly that of Tehama, beginning at the Isthmus of Suez, and extending round the whole Peninsula, to the North of the Euphrates, supposed to have been formerly the bed of the ocean<sup>7</sup>. Beside, from whence could the present mountains of salt, particularly such as Mont Perdu, spoken of already, which is composed of animal materials, have come from? for no one believes they were created as they now appear, in the form of marble<sup>8</sup>, far less with the appearance of submarine animals in their bosom. (see Parke, in text and notes, pages 240. 241.) Indeed, such appearances demonstrate, that these masses of Salt, Lime, animalo<sup>9</sup>, &c., must have been left as the deposition of a general cataclysm, while it also shews that the accession and recession, of such a phenomenon, must have been very gradual<sup>10</sup>, and gives a reasonable account how animated ter-

<sup>5</sup> This is ascertained by the sea-bucket with double valves, which brings up for examination, water uncontaminated, from any required depth.

<sup>6</sup> The current of the Rio de la Plata, where it falls into the sea, is so rapid, that the water is fresh several leagues distant from its mouth. Geo. Dictionary.

<sup>7</sup> Geographical Dictionary, anno 1813, 4to. article Arabia.

<sup>8</sup> Mount Filabers, in Grenada, is a solid block of white marble about three miles in circumference, and 2000 feet high, without the mixture of any other stone or earth, sea shells excepted.

<sup>9</sup> There was lately found at Airthrie, by Stirling, the entire skeleton of a huge whale, which is to be seen in the Museum of the Natural History class, of the city of Edinburgh.

<sup>10</sup> Parke says, in p. 240. "The huge mountains of salt we have been speaking of, and which occur in various parts of the earth, were probably



restrial beings were not totally annihilated by such an event, for if the deluge had been sudden, and its ampotis or recess, equally so, no time could possibly have been left, either for the deposition of the materials, as they now are met with, or for the escape and preservation of the human race, &c.

If it now be granted, that the mountains of salt, (for it is the muriate of soda and other *soluble* substances, we here restrict ourselves to,) are the reliques of the ocean by evaporation; we shall proceed to the following requisites, and endeavour to ascertain:

1st. The length of time an assumed quantity of sea water, takes to evaporate spontaneously at a medium temperature.

2d. The quantity of dry salt, such a quantity of sea water would yield.

3d. The depth or perpendicular height of such a quantity of salt, so deposited, upon a given surface.

4th. The length of time the said perpendicular height of salt would take for its accumulation: and,

5th. The length of time salt mountains would require to arrive at their present altitude upon the *Datum* in article 1, being that of Dr. Edmund Halley's, and upon it alone, the present enquiry is instituted.

Requisite 1. viz. The length of time an assumed quantity of sea water takes to evaporate spontaneously, in our climate, at a summer temperature, is delivered by the celebrated Halley, thus; "*Sea water evaporates in our summer heat (about 76°)  $\frac{1}{10}$  of an inch in 12 hours, or,  $\frac{1}{5}$  of an inch in 24 hours, or one day.*"

Let us now proceed, by reducing this general hint, (for it is all we have got,) to a known quantity: and assume one cubic foot, or 1728 cubic inches of sea water, taken, for example, from the German Ocean, and endeavour to ascertain, from Halley's doctrine, the length of time it will require, upon the above conditions, of temperature to evaporate spontaneously to dryness, and also how much salt it will yield.

It is ascertained, by accurate trials before the Royal Societies of London, Edinburgh, &c., that one cubic foot of sea water, taken at a medium depth from the sea, weighs, in avoirdupoise, 64 lb. 6oz. and one cubic foot of river water weighs, 62 lb. 8oz. therefore, the dry salt, (or mass of dry matter) equals 1 lb. 14oz. in one cubic foot of sea water".

Now, if the weight of one cubic foot of salt water, viz. 64lb. 6oz. be divided by 1 lb. 14oz. the quotient is  $34\frac{1}{3}$  part of the whole,

formed in very remote ages, by processes of which we can form no idea, if it may, indeed, be supposed that these changes have been slow and gradual, for several of the native salts, exhibit marks of regularity and beauty in their crystallization, which cannot be imitated by art."

" See Highland Society's Prize Essays, anno 1816, wherein the method of separating all impurities from the heterogeneous mass of rock salt is explained by I. L.



which answers the 2d requisite; or, if 1728 inches (or one cubic foot) be divided by this  $34\frac{1}{3}$ , it gives 50,330 + cubic inches for the quantity of 1 lb. 14oz. of salt produced from one cubic foot as above; again, if then 50,330 be divided by the square inches in the base of a cubic foot, viz. 144, the quotient will be\*, 34951 parts of an inch, the depth or perpendicular height of salt accumulated from one cubic foot of sea water<sup>12</sup>, and this ascertains what is demanded in the 3d requisite. Finally, for the 4th requisite, viz. the length of time, *ceterus paribus*, the above quantity of 1 lb. 14oz. avoirdupoise, of dry salt, would require in forming by spontaneous evaporation.

To ascertain this:—

The height of the cubic foot is	Inches. 12,
Deduct the depth of salt formed as already found, supra*.	,34951

Water to evaporate in inches	11,65049
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Hence, according to Halley's observations, at the rate of  $\frac{1}{3}$ th or  $\frac{1}{2}$  of an inch evaporation in 24 hours, the statement will be

Inches.	Day.	Inches.	Days.	Days.
as, 2	to 1,	so are 11,65049,	to 58,2524,	or 58 $\frac{1}{4}$ ,

which is the length of time ,34951 (or nearly  $\frac{3}{10}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  parts of an inch) would require to accumulate at the temperature of our summer heat.

The inference is now evident, and would be *conclusive*, if we only knew the height, or depth, of the mass of concreted salt at this moment in the bosom of the ocean, but since this is denied us, we must satisfy ourselves with what we observe, and can measure on the surface of the earth: viz. that of a mountain of salt in Valencia in Spain, called Cordona, is 500 feet high, and nearly three miles in circumference; now, as it is not at all probable, that this mountain of salt was simply laid down upon the bare earth with an abrupt termination of its saline base; but, on the contrary, its base may extend as far below the surface, or farther, than it rises above it (for it is known that the salt mine of Cracow, in Poland, has been worked 500 fathoms down;) we may reasonably call the mountain in question a mass of one thousand feet in depth, which is a prodigious sacrifice to probability, that it is not ten times, or twenty times more, or even, for aught we know, may reach to the earth's centre. That the entire depth must, at any rate, be very great, is rendered almost certain by the following quotation from Parke's Chemistry:—"There has lately been discovered on the banks of the Missouri, in Louisiana, a mountain of pure rock salt, of the enormous dimensions of 80

<sup>12</sup> This must be correct, for  $,34951 \times 34\frac{1}{3} = 11,99984$ , or 12 inches, the height of the cubic foot, and  $1 \text{ lb. } 14 \text{ oz.} \times 34\frac{1}{3} = 64 \text{ lb. } 6 \text{ oz.}$ , the weight of a cubic foot of sea water.

miles long, 45 miles wide, and of an immense height." It is to be regretted that the words, *immense height*, are not condescended on, which could easily have been done by geometrical or barometrical measurement, and which this immense production of nature demanded, as being quite unparalleled in the history of saline accumulation. When we hear of mountains of *immense height*, we instantly compare them to, and in fact the idea suggests, those of the *Andes*, the *Alps*, the *Pyrenees*, the Peak of Teneriffe, &c., or, to the highest of all mountains known or perhaps that exist: viz. the snowy mountains of Thibet in Asia<sup>13</sup>. But since we have not been favoured with the altitude of those salt mountains we may, from analogy, suppose they are nearly two miles high, for the average of the following mountains in altitude is one mile and 66 of a decimal, or, 1 mile, 5 furlongs, 11 poles, and 1 yard, as under:

	The snowy mountains	28000	
	Chimborazzo	20280	
	Mount Blanc	15662	
	Pyrenees	11000	
	Ætna	11000	
	Vesuvius	3600	
	Hecla	5000	
	Average height of the mountains in Great Britain and Wales	2200	
	Jura	Switzerland {	5082
	Tondre		5170
	Thoir		5196
	Mount Olympus	5000	
North America	{ Stony mountains	3500	
	{ Apalachian mountains	3000	

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123690

Aggregate

height, divided by 14, their number equals 1 mile, and 66 of a decimal, as above.

Therefore, estimating the mountain of salt, lately discovered in Louisiana, at only the height of 1,66 of a mile, (which is far from being *immense*, as Parke calls it) the state of the calculation will stand as follows, by observing what has been already stated: viz:

I. That 11,65049 inches of salt water require 58,2524 days

<sup>13</sup> The snowy mountains of Thibet in Asia, which were, until lately, (anno 1818) supposed to be impassable, have been crossed by Captain Webb, and their height ascertained; which prove to be, 28000 feet, or 5 miles, 2 furlongs, 16 poles, and 5 yards, above the level of the sea! This is nearly 8000 feet higher than Mount Chimborazzo, the highest of the Andes, which have hitherto been considered the greatest elevation on our Globe.

to evaporate to dryness, leaving 1 lb. 14 ounces, avoirdupoise, of dry salt out of the cubic foot.

II. That since 1 mile and 66 hundred parts, or, 1,66, is the average height of all the principal mountains on the Globe, it may be assumed, as a postulate, that the salt mountain in question is that height.

III. This height, 1,66, multiplied by  $34\frac{1}{3}$  (as the portion of salt in any quantity of sea water equals its  $34\frac{1}{3}$  part) equals 57 miles<sup>14</sup>, which is the height of such a column of sea water as, upon being evaporated, would leave 1,66 mile of perpendicular height of salt. This 57 reduced to inches is 3611520

Deduct 1,66 mile }	{	105177	{	Height of dry salt when the evapo- ration of the water would stop.
in inches }				

Height in inches 3506343 of sea water to be evaporated.

Hence, if 11,65049 inches (which is the height of sea water to be evaporated in one cubic foot) require 58,2524 days, what length of time shall 3506343 inches require?

Inches.	Days.		Inches.	Days.
as 11,65049	are to 58,2524	so are	3506343	to 17531699

which divided by 365, the days in a year, equal 48032, or *forty-eight thousand and thirty-two years* for the age (according to Dr. Edmund Halley's data,) of such mountains of salt as are 1,66 miles in height, or somewhat more than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and hence of our planet, at least since the formation of such mountains; but how often such stupenduous operations of the washing down of these mountains (as must be the case by salt springs) into the bosom of the deep, and there forming again by the great agent EVAPORATION, has been repeated, is beyond our *ken*; but since it is manifest, that organized matter has its growth, acme, declension, and fall, we have just reason to conclude from analogy that, brute, or insensate matter, may undergo the same changes; at least, mountains composed of soluble materials, or those easily abraded; while such of adamantine hardness, may, justly enough, be denominated primitive mountains; and, therefore, this Globe may be thousands of thousands of ages old, and coeval with that Deity, or great perpetual power, the *nature* and *existence* of which, can only be recognized, when the contemplative and philosophic mind, directs its attention to the unalterable and eternal laws of the universe!

#### APPENDIX.

A COLUMN of sea water of 57 miles, will be thought out of all probability, but we know, by the calculations of Newton and Hug-

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix.



gens, that the regions about the Equator are elevated above 35 miles more than those at the poles; that this elevation, or depth, is equally applicable to the ocean as to the land; that the sea is estimated at 36 miles deep, which would constitute a depth towards the Equator of 71 miles in place of 57; but the wonder ceases, when it is ascertained by calculation that the diameter of our earth is to 57 miles depth of water on its surface, nearly as the diameter of an orange of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches to the very thin yellow coloured rind on its surface; thus the earth's diameter in this case, is as 7960 to 57, or nearly 139 to 1, therefore, dividing the diameter of a circle into 139 parts, we shall see that one of these parts, or 57 miles of depth, bears but a very trifling proportion to the diameter, and even if the depth of the ocean was 100 miles, it would still be but a very small fraction of the body of the earth.

In Brydonis's Tour through Sicily and Malta, Edinburgh edition, 1808, p. 71. The age of Mount *Ætna* is demonstrated to be 14000 years at least, by cutting through seven distinct strata of lava, one under the other, the surfaces of which were parallel and each covered with a *thick* bed of rich earth: now, as it is mentioned (p. 62, of the above Work) that at the end of 2000 years, only a *scanty* supply of earth was found on *strata* of lava in a variety of other places, it must have required perhaps double or triple 2000 years to form *thick* beds of earth as above stated; moreover, the pit, so far as they dug, only penetrated through seven different *strata*, whereas, for aught we know, had the workmen gone deep enough, they might have penetrated through twice as many more, so the age of *Ætna* may be twice or thrice &c. the age of 14000 years; from all this, Signior Recupero, the writer of the history of Mount *Ætna*, makes it upwards of 8000 years older than the Mosaic account of the creation of the world, which Recupero owns staggers him very much as to Moses's account of the matter. Vide the above curious description in pages 62, and 71, of Brydonis's Tour.

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TO MR. RICHARD CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

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SIR,

Dundee, December 15, 1823.

THE ready compliance which you possess, in conveying to the numerous readers of "The Republican," any production that in the least has a tendency to dispel the dark clouds of error, that still envelope the human mind, has induced me to send you a manuscript entitled, "The Age of the World." It was written some years ago, by a particular friend of mine, a gentleman whose scientific knowledge long since led him to discard from his views all

the vile theological trash which is yet attempted to be associated with the enquiries of true philosophy. Though it is now 300 years since Copernicus gave, what will ultimately be deemed, a death blow to the foolish mummeries, which the writings of Moses inculcate, yet they are not entirely exploded from the reveries of those who deem themselves *pious* Christians; the beautiful principles, not only of Astronomy, but of Geology, are interwoven with all the jargon which priestcraft ever invented, and the baneful influence, which it has had upon the advancement of science, can only be appreciated by those, who, in the present day, witness its prevailing effects; who can contemplate the truth of this, without regretting the perversity of human intellect, which, in place of establishing systems consonant to the views of eternal nature, has often laid the foundation of doctrines, that will, I suspect, take the elapse of ages, e'er they be finally eradicated. Among those who have laboured *diligently* to bewilder the human race upon this point, we may rank the name of Hutchenson, who published his System of Physics, about the beginning of last century, and gained many converts to what was denominated *Moses's Principia*. Many names otherways distinguished for their learning, are ranked among the number of Hutchensonians, but I believe, generally speaking, as a system, it is now in the schools looked upon with the utmost contempt. The production of my friend contains much interesting knowledge, the data upon which the whole is founded, being drawn from the accurate observations of Edmund Halley, a philosopher, whose name stands high in the annals of modern science; the reasoning is logically correct, and to every mind accustomed to the contemplation of such objects, the whole will lead, in conclusion, to the plausibility, that this planet, which we inhabit, in place of being created out of *nothing*, about six thousand years ago, has continued to roll in the immensity of space, during the endless ages of eternity. When we direct our attention to the remotest periods, on which human tradition throws any light, we there find mankind bordering, as it were, upon the highest excellencies regarding the operations of nature. The ancient Zoroaster's theory of life, together with many historical facts recorded by the elegant and learned Volney, may lead the mind to conceive, that the earth has undergone many revolutions—at one time arriving, perhaps, to the highest attainment of intellect, at another, plunged into the dark abyss of superstition—Indeed, every thing connected with the history of the east, convinces us, that the human race has existed for the duration of many ages, far beyond the limited period, fixed on by the writings of the Jews. It has been in these regions, that a people now forgotten, explored the elements of science, and by their splendid greatness, have left monuments, the bare contemplation of which, create a multiplicity of ideas, almost too great for our imagination; the beautiful specimens of art, that are to be found in the various

parts of Egypt, convey to us, the strong probability, that there have been ages when the power of tyrannic sway was unknown, and when priestcraft could have no dominion over the moral structure of man. "How many profound truths are written on the surface of this earth; O! names for ever glorious! celebrated fields! famous countries! how replete is your aspect with sublime instruction\*." To those who delight in the contemplation of such subjects, the present communication of the "Age of the World," may prove highly interesting—it will give, perhaps, to the philosophic mind, a boundless tract to dwell upon, while the religionist, "whose sober thoughts, are never learnt to stray," may receive the impression of a truth, purely incontrovertible; that, notwithstanding the subtilty of priests, combined with the declamations of false wisdom and hypocritical piety, science now is capable of maintaining her power, and of exposing the barbarous delusion, which is still attempted to be pawned upon the weaker portion of mankind. The late numbers of "The Republican," which contain the various epistles of Mr. J. Watson, have been read here with much interest—they embrace all that is grand and dignified, and while minds like his are devoted to the pursuits of philosophic enquiry, they must ever experience that transcendant pleasure, which alone can be enjoyed by those whose taste happily directs them to the possession of such mental acquirements: his productions have called forth the observations of a correspondent, who designates himself J. E. C.; the ground however, that this author rests upon, must be considered as altogether untenable; the admission of every thing, for which there is sufficient evidence, and the rejection of every thing, for which there is not, have been long recognised as the bases of true philosophy; and, therefore, when we find a person assuming a principle beyond the boundaries of nature, he certainly must be considered, entering a field which belongs only to *disputants*, who unfortunately bewilder the various circles of science, with producing as the evidence of truth, the mere phantoms of their fervent imagination. Let the operations of nature be strictly investigated, let the phenomena of living bodies, and the general laws of matter be more comprehensively understood, before we give sanction to opinions that are alone founded upon mere hypothesis: without such views, no one will be ever able to penetrate into the great arcanae of nature! Motion is to us, as mysterious as life, and it is probable, that it is to this principle, independent of any other, that the great machinery of the universe, owes its own internal energies. J. E. C.'s remarks regarding life, seem equally fallacious; had he been intimately acquainted with the writings of the celebrated Spallanzani, the first naturalist of modern times, he would have found, that a certain arrangement of the particles of matter, was sufficient to produce myriads of animals, possessing all the phenomena of sensibility. The false notions which have been enter-

\* Volney.



tained on the subject of life, have led to much useless speculation, and a great deal of this has been owing to philosophers using the term to express an imaginary principle, while it merely implies a certain series of dependent actions; life has truly been said to be the result of organization, and the power which organic bodies possess during life, in resisting the influence of external agents, is to be attributed to the great and universal laws of attraction and repulsion, under the effects of which, the various particles of matter are governed. The difference that exists between organized, and inorganized bodies, as has been well observed, arises from the homogeneous nature of the latter, in the complete independence of their molecules, each of which, according to the beautiful idea of Kant, has in itself, causes to account for their peculiar mode of existence, in the power of resisting decomposition, a peculiarity which they entirely owe to the simplicity of their structure; on the contrary, the mode of existence in living bodies resides in the whole, the multiplicity of their elements, rendering their combinations weaker, and, consequently, more liable to be interrupted; hence, in a view of this kind, we may be able to form some idea of what constitutes life, arranging those bodies that are endowed with it, with those in which life has never existed. If we conceive the intrinsic power which organized bodies derive from the intimate relation of their molecules, and the effects which they are capable of producing in their different forms of combination, we may likewise learn how independent they become of each other, when death takes place, or when their powers are disunited: from all I have gleaned in physiological reading, life appears to me, to consist in the successive attraction and repulsion of particles; properties which are common to minerals, as well as animals and vegetables; sensation being acquired to the animal kingdom, merely by the arrangement into which matter is variously formed. To conceive that sensation is *something* combined with these forms of matter, is to believe in the existence of a principle, which is never known to appear, but in combination: "far be it from me," says an elegant author of the present day, "to account for mental operation, by mere physical motion, but that motion accompanies all these processes, I am certain; nor can the supposition, that motion is made use of in the most mysterious operations of the mind, possibly detract from our admiration of the general laws of nature." Minerals are said to exist; plants to exist and live; animals to exist, live, and think; an arrangement which includes the series of all beings, which present life and intellect, as well as those which exhibit structure; and as some difference of opinion has happened with regard to the observations of Mr. Watson, on minerals, I may just remark, that this class of substances, seems to differ from the other two by modification only; as it appears, that minerals, in their existence, undergo a progression that is inseparable from the vegeta-

ble and animal kingdom: all substances, either organized or inorganic, derive their existence either from growth, or nourishment; inorganic bodies, grow by accretion, by the accession of new layers to their surface, whilst the organic receive their development, by the effect of an internal mechanism within. "Minerals encrease by additions to their external surfaces; vegetables, by absorbing from without inward, and animals by absorbing from their internal, as well as external surfaces." It is true, the vital principle, which is peculiar to animals and plants, will always render the distinction between them and inorganic bodies, great, but the powers which living nature possesses, seem to be only a property, that entirely depends upon the various modes into which matter is arranged; in the present state of science, nothing decisively can be determined upon, regarding the real nature of the vital powers; a consideration however, which should never interfere, nor deter scientific men from investigating *strictly* the laws by which matter in general is governed. Chemistry explains the various modes of combination by the laws of affinity, while astronomy, by those of attraction, determines the rules of the universe; we should therefore justly admit physiology, to refer to those general principles. of vitality, though the essential nature of them, like affinity and attraction, cannot be satisfactorily explained. Leaving these matters however, to be discussed by those who are more qualified, I will now proceed to an affair of a less imposing aspect, though in truth, the subject which it involves, is no less interesting to the happiness and comfort of mankind, and to all those, who wish to see true science unmolested.

In the last which I had the pleasure of addressing to you, I took some notice of the circumstance of Dr. Chalmers leaving Glasgow, to preside in the chair of moral philosophy at St. Andrews; that change has lately taken place, and to use his own language, always extravagant, and sometimes, not easily understood, "he is now recalled by his *Alma Mater* as one of the *unworthiest* of her sons, from a long and fatiguing wander to enjoy a retreat and resting place within her walls;" in short, this moral philosopher, dazzled by the fanatical, and of course, indiscriminate applause, which is every where bestowed upon him, seems so bewildered in his opinions, that it would baffle the penetration of Minerva herself, to follow him through all the distorted windings of subtilty, that abound in what is called his preliminary lecture; every one who has heard him, and who is in any way acquainted with what constitutes the science of morals, must deplore that the noblest branch of philosophy, is now abandoned to persons, who have no other aim, but to plunge it among the hidden mysteries of barbarism; it is alone upon an intimate knowledge of the intellectual functions of man, that the philosophy of the human mind, can ever become an interesting object to science, and he who is ignorant of the structure on which they depend,

must involve himself, when teaching others, into mazes of the deepest obscurity.—Disdaining to follow the practice that the science itself should point out, this *learned* Doctor, is not to consider ethics as the science of mind, but to bring it under what he terms the science of duty, whereby the consideration of the laws of the understanding, will be embraced as an out-post to withstand what he calls the *withering* scepticism of Hume: “in this way considering the connection between the will and the understanding, we will be able,” he says, “to settle the question, how far we are culpable in the disbelief of some things, from having neglected to turn our minds to them, and how far right notions depend upon a right frame of mind.” My friend, who had gone from this place, to mingle in the senseless and gaping crowd, that upon this occasion visited St. Andrews, observed to me, that the meaning of such language was too obvious, not to be well understood: the rest of his observations were altogether unintelligible; a mere farrago of nonsense, outraging common sense, by telling his audience, that the lofty name of Bacon, was associated with the defenders and illustrators of Christianity.

By those who are intimately acquainted with the character of this Arch-Priest, the effrontery which he displays upon all occasions, will appear in no way surprising, as he is buoyed up by the foolish applause of a people, who seemingly wish to be guided by all the follies of bombast and superstition; who have no discernment whatever, in the choice of men qualified to unfold to them the leading features of moral principle, to teach them, that the love of virtue, is not to be acquired by the fear of an eternal hell, but because it is interwoven with the best interests of mankind; and that it is alone, by keeping clear of theological absurdities, that the feelings of their hearts will ever be disposed to promote universal happiness—In short, all that has transpired regarding the prelections of this non-descript philosopher, convinces me that in this novel undertaking he is merely a servile imitator of Dr. Beattie, who, about half a century ago, filled the chair of Moral Philosophy, at Aberdeen, and who, about that time, became well known by publishing what he called, his “*Essay on Truth*,” a work, where, in place of meeting with acute reasoning, or philosophic deduction, we find, in every page, a rhapsody of virulent abuse, mixed with much *sanctified* malevolence towards the person of David Hume, against whose scepticism, he declares eternal warfare, for, like the idealism of Berkely, Beattie was afraid that it would, no doubt, lead us to the dangerous view of considering, “*Prophets, Apostles, and Miracles*,” as nothing more than mere ideas of the mind; the “*Essay on Truth*” will always be looked upon as a specimen, how far prejudice is capable of distorting human intellect; its production will ever class the name of its author, among the number of those worthy apostates, who of late, have endeavoured to check the progress of science, by implanting into



the minds of the people, every thing that is connected with gloomy bigotry, and ghastly superstition. Such seem to be the views of this *quondam* Deistical, or, as some will have it, Atheistical Philosopher, who, in one of his frothy and verbose harrangues, lately promised, by his exertions, to root out every infidel opinion that exists in the country: but the vain, presumptuous man, might as well have told his believing audience, that he could, with a dash of his pen, exterminate the human race; his efforts will be unavailing, the torrent of free opinion will continue to roll on, independent of all the subtle and deep laid schemes, that are daily invented to retard its exhilarating advancement: with much respect,

I remain, Sir, yours truly,

WILLIAM HENRY STEUART.

P. S. Since writing the foregoing, I have received the No. of the Republican, which contains Dr. Watson's admirable answer to I. G. Regarding the experiments of Spallanzani, to which I have alluded, I observe Dr. W., in a particular manner, explains the subject, and as he is to reply to J. E. C., there is little doubt but he will, with equal ability, be able to set aside his arguments likewise; in my letter I have but briefly referred to the different topics in question: if what I have said be anticipated by Dr. W. my sentiments will at least shew, that in this remote corner, the force of such opinions, is duly appreciated.

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TO MR. R. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

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SIR,

Dundee, December 31, 1823.

ACCOMPANYING this, I beg leave to transmit you a small sum, the amount of a few donations, lately subscribed here, in favour of that cause, which you, under so many disadvantages, so ably and powerfully maintain; little as each donation is, the whole, however, is offered as a pledge of fervent, and sincere admiration, for that magnanimity of mind evinced by you, under the pressure of circumstances that would make men of common intellect, shrink with fear, were the same evils presented to them, only at a distance. You have endured many calamities, but I trust the mental energy that you naturally possess, will be able, ultimately, to repel the wicked designs of those who have conspired against the best interests of the human race. That gang of miserable wretches, known by the name of the Vice Association, is now apparently destroyed, and the unworthy Judges, that gave sanction to such conspiracies, and who, in their "little brief authority," have gone far beyond the limits of any thing known in English Jurisprudence,

are at last convinced of the impolicy of their mad and unprincipled proceedings. The eloquence of Mr. French, has wrung from them, what may be considered the most perplexing acknowledgements. The trials for what is denominated *blasphemy*, a word which in our language conveys no meaning, are now looked upon as impolitic, and the good sense of the people of this country, is not in future, to be insulted by scenes so revolting to reason and to humanity. We may therefore augur the most favourable events; at no great distance of time, your fellow citizens, will perhaps find you free from the cruel and disgraceful bondage that now surrounds you, enjoying in the bosom of your family, all that happiness and comfort, which is ever the concomitant of hearts that are influenced with the best and purest principles. The subscriptions now sent, testify that the donors do not possess the superfluities of wealth: the possession of riches may give to the generous mind, a glorious scope for the means of rational gratification, but happily, the want of them, does not hinder those animated with the love of knowledge, from participating in the highest enjoyments. Sunk into retirement, however obscure, the mind can explore the boundless productions of nature, or when fancy leads us from the delightful paths of philosophy, we may descend into the page of history, and live, as it were, among the sages of other times; even in this dark and gloomy season, "*amid all the rigours of the year, in the wild depth of WINTER, while without, the ceaseless winds blow ice.*" by the fire sides of our peaceful dwellings, with friends of the same congeniality of soul, we can, as Thomson says, "*hold high converse with the mighty dead*". These are pleasures to be obtained, independent of the pomp of luxury, or the demoralizing follies of fashion, habits, that are too often accompanied with that supercilious arrogance, which ought to be looked down upon, by every one who can enjoy the exquisite delight of literary happiness, free from the vortex of sensual dissipation. I have been inadvertently led into these reflections, by perusing lately the works of a favourite poet, the admirable Robert Burns, a man, whose principles of natural justice, led him always to inveigh strongly against the cruelty and oppression, that pride, "the insolence of office," and excessive riches, too frequently give birth to. Animated with the fervent glow of liberty, in his poetical works, exist the most beautiful patriotic effusions, conveying to the minds of his countrymen every sentiment that can teach them an utter abhorrence of tyranny, while, in his prose writings, the high and lofty ideas that prevail, intimate clearly, that he had a keenness of judgment, which, at an early period of life, prompted him to become the avowed enemy of priestcraft and superstition. Burns, however, poor fellow! notwithstanding his high independence, by a concatenation of unhappy circumstances, threw himself upon the protection of Aristocrats, who were distinguished only (the good and virtuous Earl of Glencairn except-

ed) for a dullness of soul, that rendered them altogether unfit to admire the tenderness, the wildness, the sublimity of his genius; and who, of course, basely left him to perish under the accumulated miseries of poverty and disease. Adverting to the tinsel gew-gaws which often encircle the character of those who became the objects of his satire, we have only to direct our attention to the perusal of that poem, entitled, "*A man's a man, for a' that*," to see how pointedly he exhibits them in their true, but odious colours.

In the limits which I have allotted for a communication of this nature, I perhaps might have swelled the page with a subject less local, and perhaps, to some, more interesting: but, as my mind centered upon these ideas, I imagined I could not do better than merely, *en passant*, "drop the tribute of a sigh," to a man, whose misfortunes] were many, but whose generous and noble mind, induced him to promote among his countrymen, those free and liberal opinions, which have done much to banish a religious cant, and a hypocritical gloom, that not many years ago, in the most riveted form, overspread the land. When I think of such a man, the splendour which, by vulgar minds, has been given to the names of Wellington, Buonaparte, and other cut-throats, sinks before me; born amidst poverty, and destined by education, for no other employment but trenching the soil, and directing the plough; the blaze of his mind surmounted every obstacle; nothing could repress the fire of his intellect; his genius, it may be truly said, has left in his works, a monument, that in distant ages, will be admired when the bloody deeds of those warriors shall be forgotten; when their names shall have perished in that stream of oblivion, from which, for the good of the human race, they never should have arisen. The account of the cowardly and unmanly attack that you lately experienced, has been read with feelings of the deepest indignation, and if any thing could possibly aggravate our resentment, it was the manner such a proceeding was taken notice of by those low, unprincipled hirelings, who, in the Metropolis, wallow in the hot beds of corruption; a spirited and well written paragraph in the Examiner, a journal which is much admired over all Scotland, gave, however, the lie to their abominable and malicious calumnies; while such men as the Editors of the Examiner protect your character, you need be under no apprehension from the foul, the gross, and contemptible asservations of such a paper as the despicable Courier. The day of retribution for such injuries will yet come, and I trust even the oldest of us may live to see our wishes, upon this point, fully realized.

Wishing you a speedy termination to those unjust measures that at present assail you, believe me, dear Sir;

Sincerely yours,

WILLIAM HENRY STEUART.



## SUBSCRIPTION PAPER ADDRESSED TO THE INHABITANTS OF DUNDEE.

A FREE enquiry into the subject of theology, has ever been considered, by a great portion of mankind, as an undertaking of a profane and impious nature. The wretched bigot, wrapped up in the gloomy and narrow sphere of his unbounded superstition, dislikes the exposure of his errors, or dreads the overthrow of his fanatical opinions; while the cunning and designing priest, in unison with the ambitious and tyrannical despot, aware that it is only in the wide fields of barbarism and ignorance, that a rich harvest is to be attained for their exclusive enjoyment, consider the promulgation of *truth*, as an overwhelming and approaching hurricane, that is to sweep away, and destroy, all the luxuriant effects of their extensive impositions. In the possession of an ill acquired power, these men have endeavoured to subvert human reason, and attempted to stifle free enquiry wherever it could be found; they have invaded the peaceful homes of those who have had the boldness to become its advocates, seized upon their persons, and, finally insulting them with the mummery of a mock trial, consigned them to the dreary mansions of a cruel, unjust, and arbitrary imprisonment. As a melancholy example of this modern mode of persecution, we have only to direct our attention to the fate of Mr. Richard Carlile, a man, who, in this age, may be justly esteemed as the Champion of Truth and Liberty.

With the view of liquidating the heavy penalties which these *Inquisitors* have imposed on him, a subscription has been set on foot in many of the towns in England, and an opportunity is here given to the Friends of Freedom, residing in Dundee, who may have a wish to contribute in behalf of his assistance; as a bold, undaunted, and suffering victim in the cause of Truth, Mr. Carlile stands unequalled, and we earnestly claim, in this *appeal*, the generosity of our fellow countrymen.

N. B. For the satisfaction of the subscribers, this subscription will appear in the Republican, published by Mr. C.

	s. d.		s. d.
William H. Steuart a Disciple of Mirabaud's	2 6	John Small	0 6
Andrew Small	1 0	One who thinks that every man ought to acquire Political knowledge	1 0
Lawrence Grant, one who firmly believes that the followers of John Wesley, and the Methodist Conference, are doing more to enslave mankind, than the Holy Alliance	0 6	One who thinks that Man hath a right to Free Enquiry in order to discover Truth	0 6
A. S. Sceptic	0 6	David Henderson, a Worshipper in the Temple of Reason	
W. W. a Convert to Palmer's Principles of Nature	1 0	" E'en let them sing a dying God,	
One who believes nothing without a careful and candid examination of both sides of the question	1 0	And to his blood for refuge fly,	
A Friend to equality of Rights	1 0	In Reason's Temple I have trod,	
		And say a God can never die."	1 0

No. 5, Vol. IX.

	s.	d.		s.	d.
One who earnestly desires			Thomas Gilbert	1	0
Mr. Carlile to publish			Anti-Christian	0	6
some Books adapted for			A Friend to Free Discussion	2	6
the Nursery, unmixed with			A. S.	1	0
Superstitious nonsense	1	0	J. M.	1	0
An Enemy to oppression	1	0	One who admires Mr Carlile		
One who believes that Calo-			in his efforts to overthrow		
ric is the great stimulating			the mighty Bulwarks of		
Power in Nature	1	0	Superstition, which, hith-		
W. Thompson, Republican			erto, have been the great		
and Materialist	1	0	Engine, to keep the human		
A. Merchant	1	0	mind in Ignorance.	1	6

### TO MR. WILLIAM HENRY STEURT, DUNDEE.

SIR,

Dorchester Gaol, Jan. 20, 1824.

WITH my thanks for this further support from friends in Dundee, allow me to express the high gratification I receive from your correspondence, and an acknowledgement that my publication is embellished by your sentences, I am glad to hear that the Republican and the Examiner, that excellent newspaper, have reached Dundee, to expose among you the villainy of my Gaolers and their scribes; and, as I am drawn in to speak of myself and treatment in the Gaol, I will waive the more important points of your letter, expressing my approbation of every view there taken, and make this the vehicle of more narrative on the Gaol matters.

It has flown all over the country, that I have had the *straight waistcoat* put upon me; and I hear from many quarters, that the Christians are so delighted at the bare report, as to say, that their Gods have taken up the combat which their priests cannot sustain, and that my *madness* is a sign, that the power to work miracles has not ceased! I was informed a month ago, that the "New Times" newspaper, had roundly asserted my madness, and a consequent *humane restraint* on the part of my Gaolers. The article appeared on the 18th of last month, (December). I wrote a long letter to the Editor, explaining every circumstance that had happened, assuring him that no such restraint had been put upon me, and that, when the Sheriff ordered the assault and outrage to be committed upon my person with the handcuffs, I was sitting as quiet in my chair, conversing with him, as it was possible for a man to be; as mild, as calm, and as collected, as when I was writing in solitude to him, the Editor. I offered to have a jury of clergymen to decide on my insanity, provided the proceedings on the occasion, could be fairly reported to the public. I asked the justice of the publication of my letter, in answer to so false a report, as he had sent forth; but I have not heard that the least notice has been taken of it: and still the outrageous

Dr. Stoddart goes on to cry up the abominations of the licentiousness of the press! This is a crying up of the very thing that he, more than any other man, has increased. If any one has written and published more slander, more falsehood, more calumny, more abominable writing, than any other one; that one is Dr. Stoddart. The Morning Herald, the Editor of which is unknown to me, even by name, has done me justice, and has printed some letters that must satisfy all who read them, that, instead of being driven mad by oppression, I have driven my persecutors and gaolers mad, by an open, honourable, and effectual resistance. As a piece of my narrative, I will copy a letter I sent to my nominal Gaoler, last week.

TO MR. WILLIAMS ANDREWS, KEEPER OF  
DORCHESTER GAOL.

MR. GAOLER,

Dorchester Gaol, Jan. 12, 1824.

As you are about to meet their Worships, the Dorsetshire Magistrates, in Session at Blandford, I beg leave to report to you, that you may report to them, how your and their pranks, stand towards me. In the month of November last, after having failed, by an outrage on my person, to urge me to unprepared resistance, whilst you came prepared for my destruction, and only asked an excuse for it, which I was not *mad enough*, at that moment, to give you; you removed from my room, my saucepans, coffee boiler, frying pan, and a variety of other things. Every day, for a month after, if I wanted the smallest saucepan, a man stood by whilst I used it, and removed it to the refractory cell when I had done; but within the last month, you have skulked from this annoyance, when you found it would not vex and irritate me, and one by one, all the saucepans have been left, first, for a few hours at a time, and now altogether, and the frying pan is now the only thing detained. This is another such a specimen of your high-mindedness, as I have frequently seen; but particularly with your pranks and interruptions of my parcels in 1820.

Another of your pranks towards me is, the sending of a man to put out my fire and candle at nine at night. This seems to have been the last annoyance you could contrive. It was well known to you, that throughout the first four years of my confinement, I used, as I considered myself quite at liberty to use, fire and candle at my own convenience. Within the last month, the Turnkeys say they are ordered by you, to put out both at nine at night, and leave me the discretion of kindling both again as soon as I please. This is another specimen of that infamous imbecility and petty annoyance, which distinguish the management of this Gaol.

A disposition has been also shewn to leave the knives, if I will only make it a secret; they have been, more than once,



left for several hours; but I know too well, how to deal with such dispositions as yours, to do any thing, or to have any thing done, as a secret. A favour from a man guilty of such meannesses, I would scorn to ask; and to ask to have such treatment as I now receive from you, altered, I never shall; but I shall ask you to do one thing—to pay me half a guinea for the penknife of mine which you broke, and which you had neither the honesty, nor the manliness, to communicate to me as an accident; therefore, I conclude that it was wilfully done, as an act of spite, upon the only neat and valuable thing of mine, you could get into your possession.

To prevent your insulting my visitors, is a thing I cannot do, whilst you are Gaoler; because, I fully understand, that it is your natural disposition so to do.

Wishing he had a better Gaoler,

RICHARD CARLILE.

The only answer that I have received to this letter, was yesterday. I had called for my knife, to cook and cut my dinner. It was brought about half past four; the turnkey stood by. My preparation was beefsteak, onions, and potatoes: neither of the latter could I begin to peel, until I had the knife. Half an hour had elapsed, and I had potatoes boiled, steak and onions fit for the plate, when, in came the Gaoler, *grinning with a ghastly smile*.

Gaoler.—Robert, (to the turnkey) How long have you been here?

Turnkey.—I dont know—about half an hour.

Gaoler.—Well, (taking out his watch) I'll give you another half hour—then take away the things, whether done with or not. That is my order.

Not a word of any other kind passed, and the brutal ruffian, I dare say, delighted with his official insult, walked off. I treat the fellow, as one not deserving of notice. I detest him, as I do every other mean and bad character; but it is for these qualities, and not from any personal pique; for I have never had any kind of personal quarrel with, though I have received much insult, and more injury from him. I neither speak to nor look at him.

Many friends, I notice, are fearful that I shall be poisoned. I have long had such fears, and I am willing to rest the justification of my suspicions, on some two or three of the countenances, which are to be seen in the management of the Gaol. Poison is not to be guarded against; therefore, I resign myself to the worst; and this I personally told the Gaoler, whilst the handcuffs were on my hands. I have confidence in the good disposition of the Chaplain; and I have never seen any bad disposition in either of the turnkeys, beyond that of submitting to be the vehicles of the Gaoler's lies. I have reasons to think that they are all personally well disposed

towards me; and I feel something like security in the circumstance; though I know that life is a thing easily destroyed, where the will or disposition exists to destroy; and much more easily to be done by a Gaoler to a prisoner, than in any other case; because, I have no food, but in some measure passes through the Gaoler's hands, or through the hands of his servants, who must and will do his bidding and keep his secrets, or lose their places.

Thus stand matters at present in the Gaol.

Yours respectfully,  
RICHARD CARLILE.

COPY OF A LETTER SENT TO C. B. WOLLASTON ESQ.,  
DORCHESTER.

SIR,  
It has been communicated to me by the Turnkey this morning, that the Gaoler has ordered that I am not to occupy more than one hour at each meal.

Now, if the visiting Magistrates intend to encourage the insults which this officer daily contrives to offer me, I hope they will define what number of meals I am to take in a day, what for each meal that can be cooked and eaten within an hour, and at what hours such meals must be made.

I am very fond of plum and other fruit puddings; but any of these cannot be cooked and eaten in an hour. I see no reasons why I should not have a goose for my dinner, if I chuse, and this is a bird not to be roasted and eaten in an hour. If I were to chuse the plain and wholesome fare, of mutton and turnips, I know not how a leg of mutton with turnips can be cooked and eaten within an hour. There are very few articles of food commonly used for a dinner, that can be cooked and eaten, and knives and dishes cleaned within an hour, particularly as I am not allowed County Coals to make a large fire at the expence of others, and have to pay a pocket-picking price for dust, that I find a difficulty in making a fire with, after I have got it.

I shall be glad if the visiting Magistrates will reduce all those matters to some written rules, that I may know what I have to observe: and that the Gaoler may be prevented from offering his daily insults. I am, Sir, your most obedient Servant,

RICHARD CARLILE.

TO THE CHRISTIAN JUDGE BAILEY.

LETTER XX.

Dorchester Gaol, Jan. 23, 1824,  
of the Christian's God.

IT is a matter of wonder to me, how this piece of a God of yours could be so preached, as to put down the many thousand Gods of the Pagans; though I can fully understand, how those, who were ignorant enough to believe the tales about the multitude of Gods, were also in a state of mind

to receive the stories about your new God—this last of the Gods. Perhaps, the circumstance of the Christians claiming for their God singularity of existence and exclusive power might have been the main cause of their progress and success. In the Pagan Mythology, the mind must have been distracted with the number of the Gods; and devotion is a principle that is only genuine when it is fixed upon one object.

Many months have elapsed since I last addressed you, and, though you have sent down the warrant for the discharge of my sister, you have not yet sent down mine; I am now progressing with the fifth year of a very close confinement. If your object be the experiment to try what number of years will deprive me of those healthful faculties, the loss of which brings on what is called insanity, you may be assured that the speculation will be vain; but if you mean to say, that my imprisonment is to be for life, then I can only do here the same as I would do if at large—make the best public use of the period of that life that I can. Mine is too sober, too calm, too collected a mind, to be rendered insane. I have also made my calculations as to what amount of oppression I must endure to establish free discussion; I feel that I am only suffering that which I have voluntarily sought for the purpose of accomplishing a great object; and, though far removed from family and friends, though surrounded by and in the hands of bad men, of Christians, I pass my time with a light and even joyful heart, and feel, that though your prisoner; on the score of religion and politics, I am your master. When I began to sell books, I made up my mind to go through a seven years' imprisonment. I have been just, or near seven years a bookseller, and when the seventh is complete, I shall have spent five in a prison, and the other two with prosecutions over my head. If I get off with five years' imprisonment, I shall consider that I have been truly successful; for, I have already taught you the folly and inefficiency of prosecutions for opinions, when resisted as I have resisted them.

When I write to you, I follow that subject which is uppermost in my mind, interspersing every letter with some explanations as to matters between me and you with your brother Christians; for, the general subject of these letters, your book of Common Prayer with notes, is very dull and requires some interspersions upon other matters to make it passable.

About six or seven months ago, I wrote to you upon the subject of the Ascension of Jesus Christ, and mentioned, that I had read a manuscript which shook even the Christian documents upon that subject. That manuscript is now in print, and may be purchased for half a crown. Combined with an excellent volume lately published, "Not Paul but Jesus,"



it may be clearly seen, that the variances in the doctrines of the New Testament go far to shew, that none of them have any good and solid foundation; without seeking to support them by physical and other historical facts. The "New Trial of the Witnesses" shews, that there is a flaw in the tale of the ascension not easily to be concealed or slurred over—and that there is evidence in the epistolary part of the New Testament to shew, that Paul, not Jesus, was the author, or the great propagator of the Christian Religion. The volume, "Not Paul but Jesus," shews, that the moral doctrines of the Epistles are not so good as those of the Gospels, and aims to reform Christianity by bringing it to match more with the Gospels than with Paul's Epistles. Though, I think, both works very useful in their way, very useful at this moment to be read by Christians of all sorts and all other general readers, I desire to espouse conclusions differing from both, and will neither support the claims of Paul against Jesus, nor those of Jesus against Paul. I will have neither Paul nor Jesus, but seek that species of revolution in matters of religion, that shall dispense with veneration for both and for all other systems. I grant the utility of destroying superstition, by playing off one part of it against the other; but it is not enough; there must be no suspicion of concealed objects; the enquirer must be told that no kind of religion has a good foundation; and, if he be a sincere enquirer, have the means of relieving his mind from all distractions about religion, by being shewn, in the best possible manner, that it has no support in the existing knowledge of things: and that neither Jewish nor Christian tales have a good foundation in history.

To me it is highly gratifying to see Christianity assailed at all points; and to see also, that it is not defensible at any one point. The press teems with assaults upon it; and its defenders are dumb, out of the pulpit. Whether in or out of Gaol, mine cannot fail to be a life of pleasure; for, success, in as great an object as ever was undertaken, is mine and theirs who are acting in the same cause. To raise but a suspicion, that religion is but a thing of human craft, is enough; there is no evidence to restore the mind to its former ignorance and state of deception. Hypocrisy will abound, so long as we have Christian laws, and clerical magistrates interested in the preservation of the abuse; but more and more will go on to speak out freely upon the subject; and to say the least, there are now some good examples to follow in so doing. Thomas Paine not only pointed to the independence of the United States; BUT TO THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE HUMAN MIND!

I deem it a matter of great importance to test the early history of Christianity, in the endeavour to trace its rise and first progress. I have moved from point to point, backward,

until I am quite out of the first century; and, if some evidence be not adduced to carry me forward again, I shall begin to strike off a century from my dates. One object I have in view is, to print in one volume, all the Gospels and Epistles that are extant, arranging them in the chronological order of their contents, as far as they discover themselves. I mean to mingle the books of the New Testament with the alleged Apocryphal Books published by Mr. Hone, and such others as can be added. This is a heavy job for me to look at, and I shall be glad to see it done by some other person. We shall then be able to form a better notion of the history and worth of Christianity. With reference to this subject, the rise of Christianity, I will introduce the following letter for argument.

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE REPUBLICAN.

SIR,

HOWEVER well I may agree with you on subjects of religion in general, I cannot go to the length you have done, in your address to the inhabitants of the county of Dorset, (*Republican*, vol. 8, p. 581) where you assert, that "The history of Christianity does not afford the *slightest proof* that such a person as Jesus Christ ever existed; nor that any such scenes as those, which are described in the books called the Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles, ever happened in Judea. The earliest authentic trace of Christianity," you say, "is to be found at Antioch," &c. "in the beginning of the second century."

I admit, Sir, that we have no direct and positive proofs of the existence of Jesus; but still I think it highly probable that such a person did exist, and was crucified; the silence of historians on this subject does not, in my opinion, go far in contradiction of such a supposition. If a person writing the history of George III. was to omit noticing Johanna Southcot, such an omission would not go far in proof of the non-existence of such a woman. As to the wonderful miracles said to be performed by him, it would have been next to impossible for any historian to have over-looked them, had they been true. We may believe in the existence of a person, without believing all the wonderful tales that may be told of him; we believe in the existence of Prince Hohenlohe, while we hold his miracles in contempt.

"The earliest authentic trace of Christianity is to be found at Antioch," you say, "in the beginning of the second century." I am sensible that you must be aware of the letter written by Pliny, A. D. 103, to the Emperor Trajan, requesting his advice how he was to deal with persons accused of being Christians; this, I suppose, might be about the time you speak of.

The celebrated passage in Josephus, (*Book XVIII. chap. 4*) you will say is an interpolation, and I readily acknowledge that it has every characteristic of being such; but not so, as to the passage found in the same author, (*Book XX. chap. 8*) where he speaks of "James the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ," being brought before Ananus, who was then Governor of Judea,

on a charge of blasphemy, A. D. 63; this passage has every appearance of being authentic, and, in my opinion, goes far to prove the existence of the person of Jesus Christ.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

I. G.

I have not had my copy of Josephus by me, since I have received this letter; though I well remember such a passage is to be found in it. Whether it is to be found in the old MS. copies, I cannot say; as I have never met, to my recollection, any questioning of the point. The notice of the *Jesus who was called Christ*, is so superficial, that it is difficult to believe, that Josephus could have known such a character as the New Testament represents, and have passed him over in this indifferent manner. *Christ*, we should bear in mind, is a Greek word, and more likely to have arisen in Antioch than in Jerusalem: for Antioch was in every sense a Greek city. It (*Christ*) signifies anointed, and was quite a common term in those days, applied to almost every celebrated character. I am not linguist enough to speak positively; but I do not think that the word *Jesus* is a Hebrew word: and this is an important matter for enquiry; for, if both words, *Jesus Christ*, be Greek words, is it likely that they were the name of a Jew, and that he was not known by any other Hebrew name: a Jew too who was to be the much expected Messiah? If it can be shewn, that both words, *Jesus Christ*, are Greek words; if it can be shewn, that all the earliest Christian writings are in Greek; if it can be shewn, that Josephus, and Philo, and Pliny the elder, knew nothing of a sect of Christians, or said nothing of such a sect; if it can be shewn, that there were no Jews in Jerusalem when that city was besieged by Titus (year 69 or 70); if it can be shewn, that the earliest authenticated notice of such a sect as Christians was made at Antioch, which the book called the Acts of the Apostles in part acknowledges; then, in my opinion, enough is shewn, to shew, that the Christian religion was not of Jewish origin, nor did it originate in Judea.

If Christianity did originate in Judea, as the New Testament states, then the first Christians must have been a Jewish sect, and a numerous sect; for we read of their conversion by thousands at a time. On this supposition, another difficulty arises: such a sect must have flourished most during the prime of the life of Josephus; and, being a novelty, must have excited his particular attention: but what is the fact? he writes expressly to describe all the sects that he knows among the Jews; but not a word of any sect of Christians. I know not what evidence can be more conclusive against the assertion that Christianity arose in Judea.



Begin at Antioch, in the reign of Trajan, and you have historical proofs throughout. Unquestionable proofs. Take the Theophilus addressed by Luke, to be the Bishop who flourished at Antioch about the middle of the second century; take this same Luke to be the *beloved physician* mentioned by Paul, and every thing is clear and accountable, excepting the scenes of the fable laid at Jerusalem. Bring Paul into the second century, which appears to have been the real time that he flourished: take his Epistle to the Galatians; see what he says about going to Jerusalem, and not finding any there with whom he could *openly communicate*; see what he says about his Gospel and other Gospels; see his upbraiding of Peter at Antioch; see the arrangement, that this Peter was to preach to the Jews, and this Paul to the Gentiles; see their bickerings, backbiting, and revilings, their struggles for superiority; and then you see sectarianism in its true character, and that Christianity was at first precisely what it is in England and in the United States of America at present, a system of wrangling and discussion, of fraud and corruption, of delusion and priestcraft. BLESSED SHALL HE BE WHO WILL WORK TO ITS ANNIHILATION.

My present letter will be a sort of an oddity—a general thing full of particulars: but never mind, my Christian Judge Bailey, it all tells: there is not one sentence written and read, spoken and heard, against the Christian religion, but what tends to its overthrow: there is not one sentence ever put forth and recorded upon a matter of necessary and useful reformation, but tends to produce that reformation: and it is in the multiplicity of well-spoken and well-written sentences that the matter at issue is to be accomplished. With this view, and for the purpose of working up a correspondence that cannot fail to be useful, more particularly in the neighbourhood of its birth, I shall introduce a letter written by a Scotch Presbyterian Parson, on reading the pamphlet before noticed, the “New Trial of the Witnesses.” The remarks made upon the Parson’s letter, are by a friend of the author of the pamphlet; perhaps the author himself, as he is anonymous; and I am glad to see, that he approaches near to my view of the origin and first progress of Christianity; or, perhaps, I am his pupil; for I object to no master, so as I learn from him something useful, that I did not know before: I know that I have learnt something from this author. May you do the same.

FROM A CLERGYMAN TO HIS FRIEND, WHO HAD  
LENT HIM A COPY OF THE “NEW TRIAL OF THE  
WITNESSES.”

DEAR SIR,

November 7, 1823.

IN returning your book, which I have completely perused, I must

beg leave to give you my opinion of it in writing; being apprehensive, that I may not have any opportunity of speaking with you, till the subject matter of performance shall have become too indistinct in my recollection; to authorize my speaking about it with the requisite degree of precision.

It is, therefore, I have no hesitation in saying, *a dangerous book*, not from any new or weighty arguments against the leading doctrines of Christianity, which it brings forward, (for, excepting one instance, I have seen nothing of that sort in it, with which I was not formerly acquainted,) but chiefly on account of the uncommon degree of candour, to which it lays claim, and the temperate and dispassionate manner in which it is written. The strong assertions of an earnest desire after truth, that meet the reader at every turn, and the appearance, at least, of conviction in his own mind, which the author takes so much care to exhibit, are well calculated to produce a favourable impression, and in some sort, to interest the feelings in his behalf: for my own part, I confess, that I have always been strongly prejudiced in favour of conscientious reasoning; when I see a man laying his hand upon his heart, and telling me, "Verily, I am myself firmly convinced of the truth of what I tell you," I never fail to feel a powerful bias in favour of his opinions, previous to all consideration of the foundation on which they rest; and did not this writer betray himself by many indirect hints, and expose the depth of his enmity, and the inveteracy of his purpose, by numerous sarcastic sneers, I should certainly have been in danger of being led by this apparent sincerity of his, to overlook, in many instances, the garbled nature of his statements, the inconclusiveness of his arguments, and the *exparte* proceeding throughout his whole "Trial." The cloven foot, however, is, as I have said, concealed with great care, and it is on that account (I repeat) *a dangerous book, to be put into the hands of those who have either too little skill to detect the latent foe, or too limited a knowledge of the subject, to perceive the futility of the attempt.*

As to the first part of the book, wherein he tries to discredit the ascension of Christ, we may observe, that he admits, (what indeed scepticism itself must admit\*) the reality of his resurrection, of his having been often in the company of his disciples after that event, and giving them the most unequivocal proofs of his identity.

If then, he was certainly known by great numbers of people to have been, after his death and burial, actually in the land of the living, and in converse with men for a considerable time, and thereafter was no where to be found: the question is, what became of him? Should we say with this author, that he lived to old age in the same country where this event took place, or indeed, in any other country upon earth, while his disciples were openly declaring throughout the world, that they saw him ascend into heaven, (for that this was uniformly one of their leading doctrines, it is impossible to deny,) and that they escaped detection, both before his death, and afterwards, notwithstanding the good will

of their enemies to have exposed the imposture, if they could; should we maintain this, I say, few would be disposed to question the latitude of our credulity, and still fewer to admire the soundness of our judgment, or the acuteness of our intellect. But, if we add that these very men, who had the baseness to contrive this scheme, went about at the daily and imminent hazard of their lives, affirming and maintaining, what they must have known to be a falsehood; that they persisted in this, to the end of their lives, on the cross and at the stake, without a single present enjoyment to compensate their sufferings, a single feeling of conscientious integrity to support their spirit, or a single hope of a future reward, (all which must be admitted on this author's system;) if we admit these things to be possible, we outrage common sense, and maintain a theory, at which a child would smile with contempt; a theory that does violence to all human action, with which we have any acquaintance. Of the discrepancies in the different accounts of the latter part of our Saviour's History, as narrated by the different writers of the N. T., it is needless to speak: they are too trifling to be of any material importance. Indeed, so this writer affects to consider them, at the same time that he takes care to exhibit them in the most disadvantageous point of view. I have not leisure to enter upon them, individually; but I have often seen every one of them answered and explained, in a satisfactory manner. They do not amount to contradictions; they are merely omissions of some particulars; and we should bear in mind, that the sacred historians do not pretend to give an account of every thing: but declare, in express terms, that they have omitted many of Jesus's actions.

The author's attempt to asperse the purity of our Saviour's moral character, by insinuating certain things respecting Mary Magdalene, and taking advantage of a silly saying of Dr. Whitby, who was a very silly man, is bitterly bad. Of this attempt, it is sufficient to say, that none of the opposers of Christianity at its outset; nor any of its ancient or modern enemies, till the time of Paine, ever dared to make such an objection, and there are not many, I presume, who would be disposed to prefer Paine, and this author, his eulogist, to all the Deists that have gone before them, in point of abilities.

The second part of the pamphlet, which proposes to overthrow the authenticity of the books of scripture, by the silence of Pliny, Seneca, Tacitus, &c., on the subject, when these writers were confessedly ignorant of Christianity, and so prejudiced as to despise enquiry into its merits, is as complete a failure as I have ever seen; nor can I conceive how the person, who could write, even as this author has written, did not see such a palpable "non sequitar." The last part, wherein he sets up the Apostle Paul as the sole and exclusive founder of Christianity, and attributes to his learning and talents, the propagation of the Gospel throughout the earth, and the formation of our religion into a system, is to me quite a novelty. That he was a man of learning and talents, and a most active propagator of Christianity, his belief in the truth of which,



he sealed with his blood, is what nobody has ever doubted; but it remained for this person (whoever he is) to discover that Paul knew more about Christianity than its founder, and that his apostles are infinitely superior as vehicles of moral instruction, to the plain, simple, and perspicuous, yet sublime and heavenly discourses of Jesus.

For myself, I can only say, that I hold a very different opinion, and make your author extremely welcome to hold his. It is really ludicrous to see the manner in which he glosses over, and heaps out of sight the labours and exertions of the other primitive preachers of the Gospel; the success that attended Peter, in particular, in that work, allowing no credit at all to their miracles, or Paul's either; and strains every nerve, and exhausts his whole stock of panegyric, in exalting the abilities of the apostle Paul; while, at the same time, he undermines his integrity, and represents him as a consummate knave, who pretended to a divine inspiration that he did not possess. Though this part is as well got up as the nature of the proposal allowed; it is, in my judgment, an extremely abortive attempt; and has one inseparable blemish, that the insidiousness of the design is not nearly so well covered over, as in the rest of the book.

In point of composition, the work is tolerably well executed, and with the exception of about four or five grammatical errors, that I remarked, and one sentence in page 79, which is absolute nonsense, it is upon the whole respectable.

Yours faithfully,

D. W.

P. S. I trust now in return for my plainness, you will tell me who this daring unknown is.

D. W.

#### REMARKS ON THE LETTER SIGNED D. W.

WHAT appears remarkable in this letter, are, the tone of confidence with which the writer affects to maintain opinions, proved by the publication in question to be without the least foundation; the address with which he evades, or rather with which he avoids, every argument of his antagonist; arguments, which, to him, forsooth, are neither new, nor weighty; and the Jesuitical dexterity with which he turns the acknowledged *candour*, the *temperate* and *dispassionate* style of this author, against himself; finding him subject not of approbation, but of censure. To some, this may appear rather unaccountable, but those who have been in the practice of observing the tactics of the true soldiers of the church militant, will feel no surprise; for, whoever dares to approach their territories, if he be armed with common sense and reason, is sure to give offence in whatever way he may use his weapons.

Does Carlile, or Palmer, without equivocation or disguise, boldly depict the absurdity of the popular creed; does a Voltaire, or a Paine, apply the test of ridicule to doctrines which bid defiance to common sense and reason; the cry of blasphemy is instantly raised—they are monsters of impiety—savages who use

the tomahawk and scalping knife; to contend with whom, would be an offence against duty itself; and, therefore, should receive no other answer than the pillory or the jail, the gibbet or the flaming pile.

On the other hand, does the author of the "New Trial" treat the subject of religion with great reverence, and its professors with tenderness and respect; does he prove every position, not only from general and acknowledged principles, but also from the express words of Scripture itself, so as to leave no room for hesitation or doubt; then "he shews the cloven foot," "his book is dangerous to be put into the hands of those who have too *little skill to detect the latent foe*, or too limited a knowledge of the subject to perceive the inveteracy of his purpose, and the *futility* of his attempt;" does he expose the pertinacity of the Bishop of Landaff in challenging Paine to prove that even Mary Magdalene herself was the sinner spoken of by Luke, or the weakness of Doctor Whitby in affirming the same thing—because it would not be to the honour of our Saviour to be so much in company with a bad woman;" then he is charged with "aspersing the moral character of Christ." Although, in truth, this author does nothing of the kind; he leaves the character of Christ as he finds it in the four Evangelists, after comparing them together, and ingeniously illustrating the one by the other. But he reads and reasons—aye! there lies his error! Why did he not ask the opinion of this Reverend Gentleman, who, although he may not belong either to the Roman Catholic, or Episcopal Church, would, from his vast learning and talents, be an honour and prop, "*decus et tutamen*," to any church that sees the "danger" of allowing the Bible to the laity.

For his religion it was fit,  
To match his learning and his wit;  
'Twas Presbyterian true blue,  
For he was of that stubborn crew  
Of errant saints, whom all men grant,  
To be the true church militant.  
Who prove their doctrines orthodox  
By apostolic blows and knocks.

But to be serious, this Gentleman has not ventured to grapple with a single argument of his antagonist: in fact, he seems to give up the ascension altogether, and challenges the author to say, "if Jesus did not ascend into heaven, what became of him? This surely is very silly, for the *Onus Probandi* lies with himself. The author of the "New Trial" has proved, that nobody was present when Jesus left the sepulchre, and that none of the persons who are said to have witnessed his ascension into heaven have come forward to testify the fact. Yet, this critic, in a long and declamatory passage, asks, "if it be possible to conceive that *all* the apostles would have exposed themselves to a life of privation and suffering—to an ignominious and cruel death, in propagating what they knew to be a falsehood?" Now this has something of the appearance of argument; and *it is the argument*, the *only* argument, which the great advocates of the system have always advanced; but, unfortunately, it has no foundation in truth. In the "Lives of the Saints," and other Popish Legends, we may, indeed,

find a long and marvellous history of the life and martyrdom of the Apostles, and of almost every individual who is said to have had any connection with Jesus; but we shall look in vain for any confirmation of these tales in the New Testament. The pamphlet in question, makes it appear pretty evident, that none of the persons, called Apostles, nor any individual who is said to have seen Jesus, either before or after his crucifixion, gave themselves any trouble about this affair. That the whole story of Christ's supernatural resurrection, and his ascension into heaven, was propagated by Paul and his party, and by them alone; that Peter and John, James and Jude, &c. &c. if such persons did really exist, were entirely quiescent, may easily be gathered from the Epistles of Paul himself, and from the book called the Acts of the Apostles, by his faithful pupil and companion, *Saint Luke*. It is true, Paul makes a good deal of use of the names of those persons; he even makes them deliver very learned and eloquent speeches before the Counsel and Sanhedrim; he exhibits them performing most surprising miracles, and hands us down some very ingenious Epistles from "illiterate fishermen," who could neither read nor write; in order, no doubt, to give the greater appearance of truth to his own story; but as to his receiving any of their counsel or advice, he would have none of it; for after he found that he could not get them to say as he wished, and treating Peter very cavalierly, he, in great indignation, says, "lo! I turn to the Gentiles," and immediately sets off, leaving Judea altogether. He travels into Asia Minor, Macedonea and Greece, publishing the story of Jesus's ascension into heaven, which it must be allowed he did with great enthusiasm, talent, and industry; and there we find Christianity did actually first take root and spread amongst a very numerous class as early as the time of Trajan; and that the new converts were all *genuine disciples of Paul*, is very clear from the letter of Pliny to the Emperor. While at Jerusalem, it is manifest, from Paul's own account, and that of his companion Luke, the story was entirely forgotten in the course of a very few years; for when Paul returned to the city, the people cried out, "men of Israel, help! this is the man that teacheth all men every where against the people, the law, and this place, and further brought Greeks into the Temple, and hath polluted this holy place:" (Acts, xxi. v. 28) and in his Epistle to the Galatians, (II. and 1st) Paul himself says, "Then after fourteen years, I went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus (the Greek spoken of above) with me, and I went up by revelation and communicated to them that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles; but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain." On this occasion, too, he makes use of the names of Peter and James, but it is easy to see for what purpose; and, is it not evident, that if these men knew that Paul's story was true, they would have come forward and told it themselves? for surely their interest in it was equal, if not superior, to that of Paul. But they also have left us Epistles! Well, let us look at these Epistles: what do they contain, surely they must be filled with a minute and circumstantial detail of Christ's life, miracles, crucifix, and ascension?—



No such thing.—Even Peter's first Epistle, for the second is universally allowed to be spurious, is full of vague declamation about unintelligible doctrines quite foreign to the character of the man, but corresponding exactly to that of Paul, by whom, or by some of his disciples, it has evidently been written. The Epistle of Jude is in the same strain, while that of James contains nothing more than any moral Jew might be supposed to have written, who had never heard of the name of Jesus.

It appears then, that the whole story, at least the supernatural part of it, (for that a person pretending to be the Messiah, and who pretended also to work miracles, was executed about that period, is probable enough) I say the whole story appears to have been arranged by Paul, and it may be very fairly observed also, that as it did not engage any very considerable degree of public attention at Rome for the first century, while in Judea it was scarcely known or heard of, the silence of Josephus and other contemporary historians, may be easily accounted for and will answer a thousand queries.

A. B.

By the species of remarks which have arisen upon this and other pamphlets, I see the advantage which I have over such writers, by going at once to the root of the whole fraud; by trying, not only the origin of Christianity; but its physical pretensions. Ask a man what idea he can form of an intellectual object superior to man, and you overthrow all his former notions; when he is prepared to give you an answer, you may be assured, that he is what is vulgarly called an Atheist. The Freethinking Christians can wrangle with such a volume as "Not Paul, but Jesus;" though I am of opinion they make but a sorry exhibition in such a case; but let them wrangle with the question: DOES MAN KNOW, OR CAN MAN GAIN A KNOWLEDGE OF A HIGHER ORDER OF INTELLECTUAL BEINGS THAN HIMSELF? *I invite these Christians to make this subject a text for one of their sunday, or sabbath's discourses.* I invite you, my Christian Judge Bailey, to harrangue from the Bench on this subject, when you next pass a sentence of fine and imprisonment, on a good man or woman, for the blaspheming of your religion. I have once more cleared the way to move on with your book of Common Prayer. I fear that my readers are as much tired of this subject, as I am of writing upon it; for my taste is to come in contact with a more able and acute opponent than you are. I will, however, to the best of my ability, perform this, and every other promise that I have made. Like all others, I meet with obstacles and interventions to such arrangements as I make from time to time; but I will pledge myself to do all that perseverance can accomplish.

RICHARD CARLILE.

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